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JAPAN. ~~256~~

Registry Number F 1053/378/23.

FROM
Sir C.Eliot, Tokio.

No. 50.

Dated Jan.27th, 1922.

Received Mar.15th, 1922.

F.E:Japan.

Japan's foreign relations.

Transmits resume of speech made by the Prime Minister and translation of another by Minister for Foreign Affairs at the reopening of the Diet on 21st January. Viscount Takahashi, who opened his address with remarks at Japan's attitude at the Washington conference devoted himself mainly to consideration of domestic affairs; chiefly the cost of living and the trend of national thought. Count Uchida's speech was mainly a lengthy review of the events leading to, and proceedings of, the Washington Conference. He touched on Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Shangtung negotiations and position in Siberia and dealt with evacuation of Saghalin Island.

Last Paper.

F686

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Japan
Covering despatch only

(How disposed of.)

14) Treasury, Apr. 5.

(Minutes.)

Count Uchida's speech has already been received. Copy of Viscount Takahashi's speech might go to Treasury.

It is interesting to note that the Japanese Govt. intend to devote part of the funds saved from the limitation of armaments to improving the countries waterways and to primary education.

G.H.Philips.
20/3/22

The covering despatch might be of interest to the Dominion Premiers.

! Criminals to item X

B C Newton
24/3/22

X Sir L. Oliver
15.7.38/3

V. Collenette
29/3/22

W. 1 1/4

(Action completed.) 28/3/22

(Index.) G.N.

Next Paper.

271127.—Wt.33,326/4—55M.—1/20.—W. & S. Ltd.—(90).

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JAPAN. [March 15.] 257

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 8.

[F 1053/378/23] No. 1.

Sir C. Eliot to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(*Received March* 15.)

(No. 50.)

My Lord, *Tokyo, January* 27, 1922.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith, for your Lordship's information, a newspaper résumé of a speech made by the Prime Minister at the reopening of the Diet on the 21st instant,* and an official translation of another delivered on the same occasion by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

Viscount Takahashi opened his address with some remarks about Japan's attitude at the Washington Conference. He spoke of her desire to cultivate good relations with China, to settle the question of Shantung in a magnanimous spirit and to withdraw her troops from Siberia. But he devoted himself mainly to the consideration of domestic affairs, and in particular to the present conditions of living in Japan and the trend of national thought. Although this country had not, he said, suffered much from the war directly, the moral and material effects of the conflict had been considerable. In consequence of this, and in conformity with the march of events throughout the world, it was necessary to reform various institutions in the State, and investigations to this end were actually already in progress. But, as the civilisation and the institutions of the various countries were born of circumstances peculiar to them, Japan could not blindly follow the lead of others. This was particularly true of labour problems, and any legislation as to labour required most careful consideration. In the interests too of the rights of the individual, which had an important bearing on the progress of civilisation, it was proposed to create a jury system in Japan and at the same time to revise the law of criminal procedure. An attempt would also be made to adjust the burden of taxation in such a manner as to ensure that it was shared fairly by the whole nation.

Retrenchment and economy would be the watchwords of the Government in its financial policy for the year 1922–23. The budget was estimated approximately at 1,466 million yen, a decrease of about 118 million yen as compared with the year previous. This was, however, only a broad general forecast, because financial conditions were abnormal in all countries. In some directions the revenue might show an increase, in others, such as the income-tax, stamp duties and the post, telegraph and telephone services, a decrease was anticipated. The saving effected as a result of the agreement for the limitation of armaments would be devoted to educational purposes and to the improvement of the water-ways.

The Prime Minister invited the particular attention of the Diet to certain disquieting symptoms presented by public morality and thought. The abnormal conditions prevailing during the war had created a tendency to commercial speculation and to a frivolous manner of living, with the result that the interests of the individual were placed before honour and justice. The introduction too of new forms of thought from abroad had resulted in the production of men of extreme views, who had attempted to subvert the existing order of society. All these evil tendencies must be checked and the spirit of discipline, simplicity and self-sacrifice restored.

In speaking of "public morality," the Prime Minister doubtless referred to the many scandals (*e.g.* those concerned with the Tokyo municipality, the South Manchurian Railway and opium at Dairen), which brought the administration of Mr. Hara into discredit.

The speech was the subject of criticism later in the day in both Houses, when the Government were accused of being, among other things, responsible for the present excessive cost of living, because they had taken no steps to bring prices down and stabilise the conditions of existence for the masses. The Prime Minister defended the Cabinet energetically and argued that the only controlling factor in the situation was the law of supply and demand. The Government were not so powerful as to be able to change the tendency of prices.

Count Uchida's speech, the important parts of which have already been telegraphed

* Not printed.

abroad, and therefore probably brought to your Lordship's notice, was devoted mainly to a lengthy review of the circumstances in which the Washington Conference was summoned, and to a history of the proceedings at the conference itself. In the course of his remarks he touched on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Shantung negotiations, and the position in Siberia; but, interesting though his speech was, he imparted to his audience little information which can have been new to them. His assurance, however, that Saghalin Island would be evacuated when satisfaction had been obtained for the massacre of Nikolaievsk from a responsible Russian Government, has attracted considerable attention, and the fact that in the original Japanese text the word used is "Saghalin" made some persons think he was simply referring to that part of Saghalin Province which lies on the mainland. But there is no doubt that he meant to speak of the Japanese occupation of the northern portion of the Island of Saghalin.

The decision to make such a statement is a further proof that the Japanese Government desire to remove difficulties at the Washington Conference and make a favourable impression on the Powers who are parties to it, especially the United States. But the decision must be recent. A person who saw the Prime Minister about a fortnight ago told me that, in speaking of the withdrawal of troops from Russian territory, he expressly excepted the northern part of Saghalin, and this accords with all that I have heard from Japanese officials, including Count Uchida. His Excellency has more than once told me that the occupation must be a matter for discussion between Japan and some future Russian Government, but he left on me the impression that he contemplated not withdrawal, but some form of lease or protectorate.

Your Lordship will doubtless have noticed that the phrase "satisfactory settlement with a responsible Russian Government" does not necessarily imply a speedy withdrawal.

I have, &c.
C. ELIOT.

H.G.

No.50

~~258~~

BRITISH EMBASSY.

TOKYO.

~~January 21st 1922.~~

F 1053

My Lord,

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Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, K.G.,
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of labour problems and any legislation as to labour required most careful consideration. In the interests too of the rights of the individual, which had an important bearing on the progress of civilization, it was proposed to create a jury system in Japan and at the same time to revise the law of Criminal Procedure. An attempt would also be made to adjust the burden of taxation in such a manner as to ensure that it was shared fairly by the whole nation.

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Your Lordship will doubtless have noticed that the phrase "satisfactory settlement with a responsible Russian Government" does not necessarily imply a speedy withdrawal.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble Servant,

Christ

The Japan advertiser
22/1/22.

262

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Premier Takahashi, speaking before both houses, reviewed governmental affairs briefly, laying particular stress on the Washington Conference and allied questions relating to both foreign affairs and finances. As the first official inkling of what the Government may do with a part of the funds that Japan will save from the limitation of armaments he mentioned the intention of improving the country's waterways and of giving part to the fund for primary schools.

Thought within the country and betterment of conditions of the people were dealt with briefly, the Premier urging that the Diet do all possible to curtail frivolous living and speculative habits. He referred to the rapidly increasing importance of Japan in the family of Powers and urged improvement to keep pace with other countries.

The Premier at the opening of his speech expressed regret at the death of his predecessor, Mr. Hara, He told of the Crown Prince's trip, the health of the Emperor, the making of the Crown Prince the Regent and the calling of the Washington Conference. His address then follows in part:

"Actuated by a sense of justice and humanity and prompted by a strong desire for the establishment of universal peace, the Government is conducting the affairs which arise in connection with the Washington Conference in consonance with the principles of justice and fairness, and fortunately through the harmonious co-operation of the Powers represented at the conference the desired end is now on the verge of being in the main achieved.

"As regards China, our country has made it her guiding principle to maintain and consolidate relations of good neighborhood with that country, and at the Washington Conference suitable arrangement in conformity with this principle is now being reached with the interested Powers on various questions pertaining to China. About the Shantung question in particular, the Government impelled by a desire for a speedy and satisfactory settlement is carrying on pourparlers with China in a spirit of frankness and magnanimity. As for Siberia, it is the earnest desire of the Government that political stability and order should be restored in that region as soon as possible, enabling us to withdraw all our troops now stationed there.

Effects of War Felt.

"Gentlemen, the Powers are now bending their whole energies upon carrying into practical effect post-bellum measures of rehabilitation and reconstruction. Fortunately our country has not suffered much from the war, but its moral and material effects have at the same time been felt by her in no small degree.

"In conformity, therefore, with this march of events throughout the world, it is deemed incumbent upon us to reform various institutions of state. Accordingly diverse organs of investigation have already been formed, with a view to a serious inquiry being made into these questions, and I feel convinced that there are still more problems calling for our careful inquiry. Having regard, however, to the fact that the civilization and institutions of any country are born of the circumstances peculiar to itself, we can hardly permit ourselves to do nothing but follow the example set by other countries.

"As regards the financial program for the next fiscal year, the Government, taking into consideration the actual economic condition of the country and excepting matters of an urgent nature, have formulated it with the sole object of effecting economy and retrenchment and strengthening the foundations of national finance. They intend, however, to carry through as far as possible the program already decided upon with your approval. As the result of the reduction of armaments to be agreed upon at the Washington Conference, it is expected that there will be a certain surplus in the finances of the state, and it is incumbent upon us to consider carefully in advance as to the means of disposing of such surplus. The government is contemplating to employ it in such a manner as to increase the amount of subsidy to be given toward the primary school funds and of the expenses for the improvement of waterways.

Condemns Frivolous Living.

"There is a matter to which I am anxious to invite your particular attention on this occasion. That is the question in regard to the general trend of thought and public morality of the country. Abnormal circumstances prevailing in the economic world during and after the great war have created a tendency among our people to lend themselves to speculation and a frivolous manner of living with the result of placing their own interests before honor and justice. It is a cause of profound regret that with the introduction of new thought from abroad, men have been produced in our country who, having fallen a prey to extremist views, have attempted to subvert the order of society.

"It is my sincere desire that with your co-operation, so evil a tendency may be checked and that the foundations of public morality may be strengthened through the improvement of education, while the spirit of public discipline is promoted through the strict application of the laws and in particular through the efficient working of judicial authority. And so the spirit of self-sacrifice in the interest of the state, coupled with the sense of justice and purity and the spirit of simplicity and steadiness should by every possible means be enkindled throughout the whole country. With this object in view, I have been spending much thought upon the promotion of the spirit of discipline in the public service since I was called to office.

Responsibilities Increasing.

"As a principal member of the League of Nations, as well as of the Washington Conference, the influence of our country in the councils of the world is ever increasingly apparent, with the result of a corresponding increase in the weight of our responsibilities. It is expected that with the reduction of armament as a fruit of the Washington Conference, the nations of the world will devote their energies to the development of their trade and industry as well as to the promotion of their general culture. In such a momentous period as this, our country, having regard to her position in the world, should further improve the means of traffic and communications and develope her trade and industry with a view to holding her own in the economic competition of the world and contributing to the progress of civilization. Young as I am in my present office, I am doing my utmost in all sincerity towards the accomplishment of this great task and your hearty co-operation, in this matter is most earnestly desired."

Budget Is Only Forecast.

Speaking as Minister of Finance, Viscount Takahashi said that anything like accuracy could not be expected in regard to a review of the income and expenditures in the fiscal year of 1922. He estimated that the budget for the year would total about 1,466 million yen for each revenue and expenditures, which would mean a decrease of about 118 million yen in each.

"Seeing that the 10th financial year is still in progress and also because the conditions of the financial world are abnormal and fraught with possible eventualities in many respects," he said, "it is only possible to attempt here a broad forecast. Of the various items of revenue, the business tax, sugar excise, consumption tax on textile fabrics, customs duties and profits of the Monopoly Bureau are expected to realize increases, while the income tax, stamp receipts and receipts from post, telegraph and telephone service may probably fall below the estimate. On the whole the revenue situation, regretful to say, cannot be considered reassuring.

"Accordingly, in drawing up the budget for the 11th fiscal year the Government adhered to the policy of checking financial expansion and of placing the national finance on a sound basis, so that all new undertakings, with the exception of those judged imperative and urgent, were relinquished, the attention of the authorities being devoted to providing for all those projects already determined upon. The budget totals in round figures 1,466 million yen in each revenue and expenditure, the revenue consisting of roughly 1,244 millions in the ordinary and 221 millions in the extraordinary section, and the expenditure of 939 millions in the ordinary and 526 millions in the extraordinary section. Compared with the corresponding figures in the preceding year's budget, both revenue and expenditure show a decrease of 118 millions in grand total. In Revenue the decrease amounts approximately to nine millions in the ordinary section and 108 millions in the extraordinary, while expenditure, though recording an increase of 28 millions in the ordinary section, is 146 millions less in the extraordinary section, the balance therefore being a decrease of 118 millions.

Income Tax to Fall.

In the revenue estimate taxes are anticipated to yield roughly 734 million yen, which is 18 millions below the corresponding figure for the preceding year. To mention only those revenue sources showing either gain or drop, as the case may be, the income tax is expected to fall by 64 millions, while a gain is anticipated for the business tax of roughly 18 millions, of 17 millions for the tax on sake. and 9 millions for the consumption tax on textile fabrics. For other items no particular difference is expected from the corresponding figures for the preceding year.

"The stamp receipts being estimated at 83 millions, drop by six millions; the proceeds from state undertakings and property, put at 347 millions, gain 16 millions. Two items worthy of notice in this connection are the forestry yield and the monopoly profit, both of which are credited with seven millions. The sundry receipts, estimated at 33 millions, fall of four millions. The revenue surplus as transferred from the preceding year amounts to 110 millions, of which 67 millions are claimed by the prescribed arrangement, while 47 millions have been newly transferred to meet the deficit in the revenue.

"In the expenditure estimates the policy of utmost retrenchment has been followed and at the same time the postponement plan has been adopted whereever the prosecution of the prescribed program admitted it. The retrenchment effected in the ordinary section totals 23 millions and the postponment in the extraordinary section represents roughly 96 millions. Additional appropriations have been made for those measures which were concluded to be of urgent importance. As regards the question of national defence the policy to be pursued in future is to be elaborated as soon as the various international conventions for limiting armaments have been definitely agreed upon. The time being yet premature for it, the Government has made within the limit of previous allotment under the program a temporary expedient judged necessary for carrying it into effect. In other respects proper attention was paid for realizing the prescribed plans, additional provisions called for by the rise of prices of commodities have been made, and moreover some new items have been included.

Loan Issues Summarized.

"In the special accounts for the Korean government-general and the Kwantung and Saghalien governments grant in aid has been more or less increased. The administration of the islands placed under Japanese mandate has called for the creation of special finance of the South Sea Government, involving grant in aid of ¥3,300,000.

"As regards the loan-issue projects the total floated during the 10th year of Taisho reached 665 million yen, of which the new issue represented 359 millions and the renewal 306. In making arrangement for the issue of loans the Government has adopted on the whole a policy calculated to preserve proper working between the issue and the money market. Special attention was paid to consult the convenience of financial requirement and in consequence to put the term of redemption as long as circumstances permit, and moreover to avoid such overlapping of redemption as to involve enormous repayment at one time. The various undertakings loans allotted for the 10th fiscal year, exclusive of those independent of public subscription, aggregated, as estimated, 182 million yen. The bulk has been successfully raised, the balance left on hand to be realized, it is expected, during the coming fiscal year.

"Those projects to be financed by public loans during the 11th financial year have on the whole been restricted to the items already fixed. Fifty-four millions come under the general finance; 80 millions are claimed for railway construction and improvement, 53 millions for various projects in Chosen, Taiwan, Karafuto and Kwantung, in all 188 million yen, this being about 20 millions smaller than the estimated figures for the preceding year. As roughly 12 millions are to be raised by borrowing or other expedients, out of the total of 188 millions, the new issues to be raised on the market during the 11th fiscal year will in practice represent 176 millions, or 6 millions less than for the preceding year. The emergency expenses require something like 75 millions to be met by either borrowing or public loans, this sum being less by about 25 millions than the corresponding estimate for the preceding year."

Diligence and Thrift Urged.

In concluding, the Minister of Finance said that the wounds caused by the European war are still unhealed. "We must be prepared to devise urgent measures demanded at this extraordinary juncture," he declared. "We must speedily rouse ourselves from the vicious habit of luxury and indulgences engendered by the temporary prosperity enjoyed for some years and betake ourselves to the virtuous practices of diligence and thrift, so that the organization and working of all business undertakings may be thoroughly adjusted and improved, the cost of production may be lowered and the efficiency of work of all descriptions may be promoted.

"Then and then only will it be possible to strengthen our economic position and to ensure national prosperity. It is earnestly hoped that the proposed budget will after due consideration and discussion be approved by the House."

The part which relates to the international affairs was cabled to all of the Japanese Embassies and Legations.

Foreign Minister's Speech
at the 45th Session of the Imperial Diet.

Gentlemen,

On this occasion of the opening of the 45th session of the Diet, I feel it a great honour, prior to peviewing the foroign policy of the country, to speak about the journey abroad of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince, a circumstance entirely unparalleled in the annals of the country. His Imperial Highness went on his travels in March last year for his own purposes of study and observation, and after having called at various British ports from Hongkong to Gibraltar, he landed in England on May the 9th. Then His Imperial Highness paid a visit to various European countries, and came back safely in September last. Short as the length of his trip was, His Imperial Highness came into close touch with the sovereigns, authorities and people of every country he visited and left a most agreeable and profound impression everywhere he went, with the consequence of promoting more

than ever the prestige of our country in her relations with the Powers. Such a happy result being entirely due to the remarkable gifts and the perspicacity of intelligence with which His Imperial Highness is endowed, it must be considered as a matter of unspeakable gratification and congratulation for the whole nation.

I wish now to review the development of our foreign policy during the past year, which was a most eventful period for the country from a diplomatic point of view. Of all the happenings during that period, the Washington Conference stands out as an event of the greatest importance to the country.

On July 11th last the Government of the United States approached the Japanese Government, inquiring their views as to the opening of an international conference for the discussion of the question of disarmament as well as of the Pacific and Far Eastern questions. Later, on August 13th the Secretary of State of the United States forwarded a formal invitation to the conference. The noble object with which it was called having fully commended itself to the Japanese Government, they accepted it promptly with high hopes,

impelled by a strong desire for its complete realisation. Belgium, Holland, China and Portugal not to speak of Great Britain, France and Italy, having also accepted a similar invitation, the conference was inaugurated at last on November 12th. Since then every country represented at the conference has been assiduously participating in the discussion and adjustment of various important questions in a spirit of cooperation and compromise. The treaty concluded between the Four Powers, Japan, Great Britain, the United States and France, the text of which was published some time ago, is to be regarded as the first great fruit of the conference and as such it deserves particular attention. The treaty was duly signed on December 13th last by the delegates of the Four Powers concerned. In connection with the discussion of this treaty, the question of the agreement embodied in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was naturally called into question, and after deliberate consideration, it was decided that the agreement of Alliance should terminate upon the coming into force of the present Treaty.

You will remember that in the last session of the Diet, I had the pleasure of speaking to you to the effect that in July, 1920, a joint notification was sent to the League of Nations by the British and the Japanese Governments in regard to the renewal of the Agreement.

Since then, communications were exchanged between the Governments of Tokio and London, and it was agreed in consequence that the agreement of Alliance should continue in force until a definite step should have been taken by the two Governments, and that if any situation arose whilst the agreement remained in force, in which the procedure prescribed by the terms of the agreement is inconsistent with the procedure prescribed by the Covenant of the League of Nations, then the procedure prescribed by the said Covenant shall be adopted and shall prevail over that prescribed by the agreement. Consequently a second communication to this effect was sent to the League of Nations on July 7th last by the two Governments conjointly. In this manner it was decided by mutual agreement that the agreement of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance should remain in force even subsequently to July 13th last. It was

desired at this time by Great Britain that, having regard to ~~xx~~ the important changes which have taken place in the situation, a Pacific conference should be called for the discussion and adjustment of various questions concerning the Far East and the agreement embodied in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Finally the British Government expressed to the Japanese Government in the first place, their desire is this respect. Eventually, as stated above, the conference for the discussion of the Pacific and Far Eastern questions together with the question of disarmament was opened at the instance of the Government of the United States.

On the occasion of its assembly, a question arose among the Four Powers, Japan, Great Britain, France and the United States, as to the possible conclusion of a Treaty among themselves and such a treaty, having ultimately

been signed by them, the agreement embodied in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance has come to be terminated while the maintenance and consolidation of the general peace in the region of the Pacific Ocean is to be assured by the new Treaty.

You will recollect that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance has been a powerful instrument of not only promoting and strengthening the relations of friendship and goodwill between Great Britain and Japan for the past 20 years, but it has also rendered an incalculable service in the interest of the maintenance and consolidation of general peace in the Far East. We can, therefore, hardly permit ourselves to see its termination without recalling to our minds the invaluable service it has rendered in the past, yet the conclusion of the new

~~269~~ 14

treaty being a clear index to the progress of the times; it is to be taken as a manifestation of the spirit of international friendship and good- will on an enlarged scale and I consider it a matter of profound gratification to the Japanese Government that by virtue of the treaty in question, the general peace of the region of the Pacific Ocean is to be assured conjointly by the Four Powers.

As regards the reduction of naval armaments, Mr. American delegate, Hughes, [illegible], laid before the first plenary session of the Conference on November 12th last a detailed plan to the effect that upon the basis of the existing naval strength of the Powers concerned, they should abandon the building programme of all the capital ships either actual or projected, while scrapping a certain portion of their old ships, and that there should be an absolute naval holiday, which

which would permit of no replacement of the scrapped ships for a period of 10 years after the coming into force of the agreement. Further he proposed that the ratio of the remaining capital ships for Japan, Great Britain, and the United States should be 3,5,5, so that as a result of replacement after the 10 years' period, Japan should retain 300,000 tons while Great Britain and the United States would maintain 500,000 tons respectively, and that the provisions for auxiliary combatant craft other than capital ships should be made principally in accordance with the principle as above enunciated. The proposal of Mr. Hughes is a most drastic and bold one, and when it was made, it created a great sensation as being a clear index to the spirit of genuine sincerity in which the Government of the United States have been solicitous to achieve the realization of the ideal of the limitation of armaments. The colleagues of

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the Powers concerned made speeches of eulogy on the occasion of the second plenary session on the 15th, and the Japanese delegates prompted by the consideration that the proposal will go a long way towards the consolidation of the general peace of the world, expressed then their readiness to accept it in principle.

Subsequently at the conversation of the technical experts and at that of the delegates of the three Powers concerned, there were serious exchanges of views among them in regard to the position of their respective countries. The Government prompted by the spirit of international cooperation and having ascertained the views of Great Britain and the United States in regard to the maintenance of status quo of the fortifications of the Pacific islands, agreed in the interest of the general situation to the original plan of a 10 to 6 ratio, which in their opinion was considered sufficient from the point of view of the national security of the country

and a draft agreement in regard to the limitation of capital ships has been arrived at between Japan, Great Britain and the United States. Later on, Mr. Hughes submitted to France and Italy a plan of limiting their capital ships based upon the draft agreement above alluded to, with the ratio of 1.75 as against 5,5,3 of the United States, Great Britain and Japan, and a final settlement has almost been reached between these various Powers.

As regards the particulars concerning the limitation of auxiliary combatant craft, the method of replacement and scrapping war vessels, the restriction of tonnage and armaments, as well as the limitation of the use of submarines are now in course of discussion, and although unanimity

unanimity of views has been secured in regard to some of these questions, it has not yet reached the stage of my making a report to the House. Of these questions, that regarding the limitation of the use of submarine craft has been proposed by the American delegate Mr. Root with the aim of laying down explicit rules of international law in order to restrict the destruction of commerce by submarines. The Japanese Government having expressed their willingness to accept it in principle, it is hoped that these questions will receive a satisfactory adjustment in due course and as agreement in regard to naval reduction embodying all the matters above referred to is expected to be signed at no distant date by Japan, Great Britain, the United States, France and Italy.

As regards the question of the reduction of land forces, it was made a subject of discussion for the first time on the occasion of the third plenary session

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on November 21st, when the delegate of Great Britain and the United States and particularly advanced the need of considering the question of coming to a general agreement on this subject. The Japanese delegates expressed their readiness to accept the proposal in principle, declaring at the same time that Japan had no intention whatever of maintaining land forces in excess of the minimum deemed necessary for her self-defence in the light of the general situation in the Far East.

The French delegate strongly opposed the entertainment of the proposal on the ground that the question of land force can hardly be considered at the same time with the question of the naval forces, which being capable of indefinite movement, are in a position to be concentrated at will and that each country has the right to fix the strength of her armed forces necessary for the national defence in the light of her particular position and circumstances as regards the neighbouring countries.

He further insisted that in view of the foregoing consid-

er-tio-l,

eration, it was inopportune at least that the question should be discussed at a time when the after effects of the great war are still everywhere being felt. Consequently, it has been decided to defer the question for future discussion. Later on, a special committee was set up for the consideration of the question of the formulation of aerial regulations, the restriction of the use of asphyxiating gases and the laws of war, and the investigation of these questions is now going on under their auspices.

Now, as regards the Chinese question, it is a matter of sincere regret that unfortunately in China not only have peace and unity not been restored as yet, but the situation there appears of late to be developing in an opposite direction. I should like to believe, however, that this being a transitory phenomenon, the whole nation of China is now on the road to a national awakening. The Japanese Government, always prompted by a most sincere

cere desire to see the definite establishment of an efficient political organization in that country, have taken an attitude of absolute impartiality towards the internal strife of China, in a spirit of justice and fairness, and they have, in all sincerity, made all possible efforts conjointly with the other interested Powers with a view to making whatever contribution she could make to the furtherance of the general welfare of that country. It is hoped, therefore, that in full appreciation of the good-will and friendship thus shown by the Powers concerned, China, while putting forth sincere efforts for the introduction of various reforms with the object of promoting the general happiness of her people, will use her best endeavours towards the furtherance and realization of the noble cause of the interdependence and commonweal of humanity at large, by further opening her doors to the world and by strengthening still more the relations of cooperation with the Powers concerned.

cerned. With such a hope and intention, the Japanese Government have participated in the Washington Conference and have been endeavouring to demonstrate through our delegate, the cordial spirit and sincere desires of our country.

Upon the inauguration of the Washington Conference, the Far Eastern Committee was established for the discussion and settlement of various questions of importance relating to China. At the very beginning of the Conference, the resolution embodying the four great principles formulated by the American delegate, Mr. Root, was submitted to and adopted by the said committee as well as at the plenary session of the Conference. Since then various questions have been dealt with in accordance with the principles thus laid down. In fact, questions such as 1. Abolition of extraterritoriality, 2. Withdrawal of the foreign postal agencies, 3. Evacuation of foreign garrisons, 4. Adjustment of wireless telegraph, 5. Restoration of leased territories, 6. Raising of Customs Duties, have either been agreed upon or are being seriously considered

at

at the Conference.

These being questions involving vital interests of our country, the Government, while considering with deep sympathy the legitimate claims and hopes of China and endeavouring to render any assistance in their power towards their realization, are taking the steps deemed suitable in accordance with the development of circumstances, always taking pains to prevent any injury sustained in questions of vital importance to the country. ... Powers concerned, taking due cognizance of the position and interests of this country, appear to be endeavouring to avoid the interference with the questions such as those regarding accomplished facts based upon treaty.

In this connection, mention must be made of the Shantung Question. You will remember that upon the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace in the year before last, the Government approached China with a view to entering into direct negotiations with her on this subject, but on account of her unwillingness to entertain our proposal, the question has been left unsettled.

Subsequently,

Subsequently, there being indications that China had come to entertain the idea of entering into negotiation with this country on the subject, the Japanese Government, after due deliberation, formulated terms deemed on all hands just and fair and presented them to the Chinese Government on September 7th with a view to embarking upon direct negotiations with that country. Since then, communications have been exchanged between the two governments, the Japanese Government constantly exercising their best efforts to secure its settlement once for all, but owing to the dissatisfaction felt by China with the terms presented by the Japanese Government, the negotiations were brought to a standstill.

Occasion for itself making it at the Washington Conference possible for the delegates of Japan and China to enter into direct conversation on this subject, thanks to the good offices of Mr. Hughes and Mr. Balfour. Accordingly since December 1st

1st last, these delegates have met together over twenty times and unanimity of views has happily been reached as to various questions, but in regard to the disposition of the Shantung railway, opinion was divided and the conversation relating to the railway question was obliged to be descontinued for the time being. In these negotiations on the Shantung question, the government, in pursuance of their fixed policy in China as defined above, have spared no efforts towards securing its speedy settlement, always actuated by the spirit of compromise and conciliation. It is therefore a matter for sincere regret that on account of the difficulties which have arisen in regard to the Shantung railway, the whole question has not yet been settled.

On this matter of the Washington Conference, it is probable that there will be more than one occasion

<u>for</u>

for me to address you during the present session of the Diet. I shall therefore permit myself at present to confine my explanations respecting the conference to the above statement and pass on to other questions.

As regards the question of Mandate for the South Sea islands formerly in the possession of Germany, I had the pleasure of addressing you in the last session of the Diet. Subsequently the Government having received towards the end of March last a certified copy of the Mandate as confirmed and duly established at the Council Meeting of the League of Nations in Dec. 1919, took steps to publish it on April 29th last. Thus our mandate in respect of the South sea islands has been fully established, but the United States of America refused to recognize it on the ground of having made reservations in regard to the mandate over the island of Yap at the Supreme

Council

Council and also on the plea of her ri
victorious [illegible]. Moreover
the preliminary conference on Internati
tions held in Washington in 1919, the U
made various claims vis-à-vis the deman
retain in her hands the cable lines ema
of Yap, with the result that no definit
reached on that occasion. Subsequent
to a concession made by Great Britain a
understanding was almost reached among
in regard to the disposition of the cab
formerly in German possession. The Jap
therefore, taking into consideration th
general situation and prompted by the s
found it necessary to secure the adjustm
As a result of repeated communications
them, an understanding was reached as t
of the cable lines above referred to, a
at the same time that the United States
our mandate over the islands formerly in
sion to the North of the Equator includi

Council and also on the plea of her right as one of the victorious [illegible]. Moreover, on the occasion of the preliminary conference on International Communications held in Washington in 1919, the United States made various claims vis-à-vis the demand of Japan to retain in her hands the cable lines emanating from the island of Yap, with the result that no definite agreement was reached on that occasion. Subsequently, however, owing to a concession made by Great Britain and France, an understanding was almost reached among the Powers concerned in regard to the disposition of the cable lines in the Atlantic formerly in German possession. The Japanese Government, therefore, taking into consideration the trend of the general situation and prompted by the spirit of co-operation, found it necessary to secure the adjustment of these questions. As a result of repeated communications passing between them, an understanding was reached as to the desposition of the cable lines above referred to, and it was agreed at the same time that the United States would recognize our mandate over the islands formerly in Germen possession to the North of the Equator including the island of

~~283~~
28

Yap, as a compensation for our compliance with the American claims in regard to the landing of a cable line on the island of Yap, the freedom of its operation, the grant of certain concessions pertaining thereto and various other matters. I am happy to tell you that the Treaty embodying these terms will be concluded before long.

As regards the Siberian question, the Far Eastern Republic, which was established in the autumn of 1919, as a result of compromise on the part of local authorities in Eastern Siberia, came to assume the form of an unified government as a result of the constitutional assembly held in February last year, and declared their intention to adopt an anti-communistic and democratic form of government. On more than one occasion they approached the Japanese Government with proposals to open up relations of friendship and commerce. Notwithstanding the

political

political upheaval which took place later in Vladivostok, the Japanese Government, in acceptance of the wishes of the Chita Government in the interests of the general situation, opened up negotiations with them at Dairen. The principal object of these negotiations, apart from the discussion of questions in regard to general commerce, is simply to secure assurances from the Chita Government for the protection from danger of the lives and property of our residents and the security of general traffic, the removal of all forms of menace to our national existence and the freedom of industrial pursuits, and I need hardly say that in entering into these negotiations, we have no territorial ambition nor any intention to secure for ourselves exclusive rights of any kind. As regards the progress of these negotiations, there are not wanting causes for real regret, but the views of both parties are now by degrees approaching agreement. It is hoped therefore that the Chita

government,

Government, in full appreciation of our real intention will give us the desired assurances at no distant date. As announced from time to time, Japan was compelled to leave her troops in a certain part of the Maritime province province by sheer necessities of self-defence against the dangers and menaces just alluded to. Accordingly, the Japanese Government have on no occasion interfered with the internal politics of Russia, but have adhered strictly to the principle of absolute neutrality as regards the political strife of the Russians. Upon the re-establishment of political stability in these regions providing assurance against the dangers mentioned, Japan, needless to say, will lose no time in withdrawing these troops. As regards the occupation of Shan Sahgalien island, it having been caused by the unprecedented massacre at Nicolaevsk, Japan will certainly discontinue upon a satisfactory settlement of

that

that incident with a responsible Russian Government.

In conclusion, I permit myself to say that, in the conduct of their foreign policy, the Japanese Government, while endeavouring to enhance the position of our country in the world by paying constant regard to the general situation and the paramount necessity of insuring the peaceful development of the country, and maintaining harmonious co-operation with the foreign Powers, have always been guided by a sincere wish to making whatever contribution lies in their power to the furtherance of the common interests of the nations of the world. In dealing with the various questions arising at the Washington Conference, they have acted in no other spirit than this. The Powers concerned have not been slow to recognize the spirit of justice and fairness thus exhibited by our country with the result that the gloomy clouds of misapprehension and suspicion which were reported to have been at one time hanging over the horizon of Europe and America in regard to the real intentions of our country have apparently now been dispelled, and I am most happy to assure you that the relations of our country with foreign powers have in consequence grown in intimacy and friendship. With the rapid changes in the general situation of the world, an institution such as the League of Nations which was formerly was regarded as Utopian has not only come into

existence but the spirit underlying the League being diffused throughout the world with the progress of time, its foundation appears to have been strengthened: moreover, the reduction of armaments is now on the eve of realization, as the result of the Washington Conference. Together with the signature of Quadruple Agreement and the adoption of fundamental principles in regard to China, these features of our time constitute an expression of the sincere wishes of humanity for the establishment of a lasting peace throughout the world. They must not be taken as transitory makeshifts of the Governments concerned. Surely this appears to be an age in which by ignoring the dictates of exclusiveness and selfishness, every nation on the face of the Globe is exerting its utmost efforts in the interests of peace and justice towards the full realization of the spirit of international co-operation

tion and the cause of interdependence and common weal of humanity, acting in concert each with each. Such a tendency is in full accord with the permanent interests of this country and I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that there is no other path than this which leads to the ever increasing properity of the country.

1922

F. E.

JAPAN.

F 426

JAN 30 1922

34

Registry Number } F 426/426/23

TELEGRAM FROM
Sir C.Eliot
(Tokio)

No. 26

Dated 27th. Jan. 1922.

Received 30th. Jan. 1922.

F: Japan

Proceedings in the Japanese Diet.

Though attacks have been made on the government this week for their failure to reduce the cost of living, for corruption prevailing in public services and for their policy at the Washington Conference, criticisms of their foreign policy have not been so bitter or so general as was feared. Further attacks are expected.

Last Paper.

(*Print.*)

(*Minutes.*)

Repeated to Washington Delegation.
Pacific Conference Special file.

G.P. Phipps.
30/1/22

See Minutes
on F 4791/2635/10
G. M. Painter
2/2/22

(*How disposed of.*)

Repeated to Washington Delegation No. 229.
30 Jan. 1922.

(*Action completed.*) 3/2/22

(*Index.*)

Next Paper.

3627

(P) (67270) Wt. 33326/4 Gp. 163 3,000 1-20 W & S (W B & L)
(68998) 8485/160 Gp. 163 2,000 6-20

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Decode. Sir C. Eliot (Tokyo),
January 27th 1922.

D. 3.50 p.m. January 27th 1922.

R. 8.30 a.m. January 30th 1922.

No. 26. (R).

This week in the Diet has been taken up mainly with attacks on the government for their failure to reduce cost of living, for corruption prevailing in public services and for their policy at Washington Conference, But criticism of foreign policy has not yet been so bitter or so general as was feared. Further attacks are however expected.

2.

1922

F. E.

JAPAN. - - - - 3

F 627

FEB 9 1922

36

Registry Number } F 627/426/23

FROM

Sir C.Eliot
(Tokio)

No. 4

Dated 5th Jan.1922

Received 9th Feb.1922

F:Japan

Opening of 45th Session of Japanese Diet.

The Diet opened on 26th December, the ceremony being brief and formal. The members of the two chambers gathered in the House of Peers and the Prince Regent read to them a message from the Emperor, translation of which is given.

Departure from precedent in message from the Throne at the ceremony was warning to nation that it has assumed heavy responsibilities as result of having become one of the Great Powers, and is expected to live up to them.

Last Paper.

7426

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

In the went of the Budget not being approved by the Diet, the Government carries out the Budget of the previous year (Constitution, Art. 71).

G.H.Clerke.
10/2/22

B C Newton
11/2/22

V. Wellesley
13/2/22

W.T. 13/2

SEEN BY
14 FEB 1922
SIR EYRE CROWE

(Action completed.)

14 2 22

(Index.)

Next Paper.

7442.

272218.—Wt. 8485/160—22M.—6/20.—W. & S. Ltd.—(90).

No.4

4

BRITISH EMBASSY.

TOKYO.

F 627
FEB 9 1922

January 5th ~~1922~~.

My Lord,

I have the honour to report that the 45th Session of the Diet opened on the 26th ult., The ceremony was brief and formal. At 11 o'clock in the morning the members of the two Chambers gathered in the House of Peers and His Imperial Highness the Prince Regent read to them a message from the Emperor of which the following is a translation:

"WE hereby perform the ceremony of opening the "Imperial Diet and announce to the members of the "House of Peers and of the House of Representatives "that WE are greatly pleased that the relations between "this Empire and the Treaty Powers are becoming increas-"ingly friendly and that good results are likely to be "achieved by the Washington Conference.

"OUR country has assumed heavy responsibilities as "a result of its having become one of the Great Powers, "and at home our affairs will multiply with the progress "of culture.

"WE rely upon the cooperation of OUR loyal subjects "for assuring the prosperity of the country and contribut-"ing to the establishment of universal peace and the ad-"vancement of civilization.

"WE have ordered OUR Ministers of State to submit to "the Imperial Diet the Budget for 1922-23 as well as drafts "of various laws, and it is OUR hope that you will bear "OUR wishes in mind and, after harmonious deliberation, "fulfil your function of giving assent."

The expression "fulfil your function of giving assent" is a regular formula and the reason for its use is to be found in certain provisions of the Constitution which prescribe

The

Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, K.G.,

etc. etc. etc.

prescribe that the consent of the Diet is required to (a) all laws (Art.37), (B) The Budget (Art.64), (c) all nations liabilities (Art.62), (d) increase in the expenditure of the Imperial Household (Art.66), and (e) Continuing Expenditure Funds (Art.68). The phrase is not understood by Japanese as implying any doubt of the Diet's power to withhold assent.

After reading the message the Prince Regent handed it to the Vice-President of the House of Peers (the President, Prince Tokugawa, being absent at Washington), and the proceedings came to an end. The replies of the two Chambers were carried to the Palace on the 27th inst., and on the 28th the Diet went into recess for the New Year holidays. It will reassemble on the 20th of January.

Messages from the Throne at the opening ceremony of the Diet have hitherto followed a stereotyped formula, being confined to an expression of satisfaction at the friendly relations existing between Japan and other Powers and an injunction to the Diet to discharge its duties. The warning on this occasion to the nation that it has assumed heavy responsibilities and is expected to live up to them is therefore a departure from precedent and for that reason interesting.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble Servant,

Chick

3.

FAR EASTERN.

1922

JAPAN.

F 742

FEB 16 1922

33

F 742/426/23

Registry Number

TELEGRAM FROM

Sir C.Eliot

(Tokio)

No. 37 (R)

Dated 15th Feb.1922

Received 16th Feb.1922

F:Japan

1 **Proceedings in the Japanese Diet.**

Refers to Tokio telegram No.26 of 27th January (F 426/426/23). Washington Conference has been the subject of further discussion in the Diet. General public show no enthusiasm for results of conference but there are no public manifestations of animosity.

Motions by nationalist and ministerialist parties for reduction of army were discussed in the lower house and referred back to Committee.

Opposition parties have introduced a motion in lower house advocating universal suffrage and a demonstration in favour of it took place on 11th February. Disturbances followed which were not serious are believed to have been deliberately arranged by politicians.

Last Paper.

F627

(Print.)

PRINTED

Japan

(*Minutes.*)

Pacific Conference Special file.

Copy to D.M.I.

G.R.Clerke.

16/2/22

Copy to Washington

3 e Newton

16/2/22

F. Villiers

17/2/22

(*How disposed of.*)

9) Washington No. 198.

14) D.M.I. Feb. 18.

(Action completed.)

RG 7/3/22.

(Index.)

Next Paper.

F897

(P) (67270) Wt. 33326/4 Gp. 163 3,000 1-20 W B & L

F 742
POLITICAL
FEB 16 1922

JAPAN

Decode. Sir C. Eliot. (Tokyo). February 15th 1922.

D. 12.10 p.m. February 15th 1922.

R. 8.30 a.m. February 16th 1922.

No. 37. (R).

RECEIVED IN REGIST.
16 FEB 1922
FOREIGN OFFICE

My telegram No. 26 of January 27th. Washington conference has been the subject of further discussion in the diet.

General public show no enthusiasm for results of the conference but no public manifestations of animosity.

Motions by nationalist and ministerialist parties for reduction of army were discussed in the lower house on the 7th and referred back to committee.

Ministerialist motion contained no concrete proposal but nationalist advocated reducing number of divisions by half and service in infantry to one year. Minister of war said that proper training in one year was impossible and deferred his answer with regard to reduction.

Opposition parties have introduced a motion in the lower house advocating universal suffrage and a demonstration in favour of it took place here on the 11th. Demand is popular but its refusal is not likely to cause trouble.

Some disturbances occurred after the demonstration but they were not serious and are believed to have been deliberately arranged by politicians.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government.]

JAPAN.

CONFIDENTIAL.

[February 16.]

SECTION 1.

[F 742/426/23]

No. 1.

Sir C. Eliot to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(*Received February* 16.)

(No. 37.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Tokyo, February* 15, 1922.

MY telegram No. 26 of 27th January.

Washington Conference has been the subject of further discussion in the Diet.

General public show no enthusiasm for results of the conference, but no public manifestations of animosity.

Motions by Nationalist and Ministerialist Parties for reduction of army were discussed in the Lower House on the 7th and referred back to committee.

Ministerialist motion contained no concrete proposal, but Nationalist advocated reducing number of divisions by half and service in infantry to one year. Minister of War said that proper training in one year was impossible, and deferred his answer with regard to reduction.

Opposition parties have introduced a motion in the Lower House advocating universal suffrage, and a demonstration in favour of it took place here on the 11th. Demand is popular, but its refusal is not likely to cause trouble.

Some disturbances occurred after the demonstration, but they were not serious, and are believed to have been deliberately arranged by politicians.

[7904 *q*—1]

FAR EASTERN.

F 897

MAR 2 1922

42

JAPAN.

Registry Number F 897/426/23

TELEGRAM FROM

Sir C. Eliot

No. 52 (R) (TOKIO)

Dated 28th Feb. 1922

Received 2nd Mar. 1922

F: Japan

Proceedings in the Japanese Diet.

Motion of opposition to amendment of franchise bill and introduction of universal suffrage was defeated on February 27th. The authorities prohibited demonstrations which had been planned, and precautions were taken to prevent crowds from collecting in vicinity of diet house, but constitutional right of individuals to petition diet was not interfered with. There was little collision between police and populace. Debate began February 23rd but was interrupted on 24th, when opposition tried to pass vote of non-confidence in speaker. On 25th non-confidence vote, and another impeaching government for its arbitrary police methods, were rejected and suffrage debate was resumed. The movement appears to be gaining ground.

Last Paper.

F 742

(*Print.*)

(*How disposed of.*)

(*Minutes.*)

Universal suffrage is probably the last thing that Viscount Kato, leader of the largest opposition party (Kenseikai) genuinely desires. It is however a useful stick to beat the government with.

G. Oliphant.
2/3/22

B. C. Newton
2/3/22

V. Wellesley
3/3/22

W.J. 3/3

SEEN BY
6 MAR 1922
SIR EYRE CROWE.

(Action completed.) R.J. 6-3-22.

(Index.) E.M.

Next Paper.

F 985

(P) (67270) Wt. 33326/4 Gp. 163 3,000 1-20 W B & L

3 ~~10~~

JAPAN.

POLITICAL.

F 897
MAR 2 1922

Decode. Sir C. Eliot (Tokyo)
28th February, 1922.

D. 6.30 p.m. 28th February, 1922.

R. 6.20 p.m. 1st March, 1922.

No. 52. (R).

Motion of opposition in the diet to amendment of franchise bill and introduction of universal suffrage was defeated yesterday by 243 votes to 147.

Numbers of delegates had come in from country and big demonstrations were planned, but authorities were apprehensive of disorder and prohibited them. Stringent precautions were also taken to prevent crowds from collecting particularly in neighbourhood of diet house; but constitutional right of individuals to petition diet was not interfered with. A number of orator-arrests were made but on the whole there was little collision between police and populace and the affair went off more quietly than had been anticipated. Debate began on 23rd but was interrupted on 24th, when opposition tried to pass a vote of non-confidence in speaker. This occasioned so much disorder that sitting was suspended for the day. On 25th non-confidence vote and another impeaching government for its arbitrary police methods were both rejected and suffrage debate was resumed. From that point till end, the proceedings were quiet. Owing to bad weather public interest seemed to decrease at the end: but I think movement is gaining ground.

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY.
2 MAR 1922
FOREIGN OFFICE.

5

22

FAR EASTERN.

44

F 985

JAPAN.

Registry Number } F 985/426/23

TELEGRAM FROM

Sir C. Eliot (Tokio).

No. 59 (R).

Dated March 7th 1922

Received March 8th 1922

F.E.: Japan

Proceedings in Japanese diet.

Refers to Tokio despatch No.231 of 13 May 1921 (F 2170/348/23). Last week was comparatively quiet and a motion of non-confidence in the government was rejected. There has been trouble,however,about the minister of education. The Prime Minister has been reported to have said that the minister of education alone was responsible for the school question,which statement caused astonishment as it was understood that the whole cabinet accepted the responsibility but the former now states that on vital questions the cabinet will stand by any minister.The matter has thus been smoothed over but further trouble is anticipated.

Last Paper.

F:894

(*Print.*)

(*How disposed of.*)

(Action completed.)

8.3.22. 16/3/22.

(Index.)

E.M.

Next Paper.

F:1011

(*Minutes.*)

The "school status" question referred to herein was occasioned by a remark which seems to have been made privately in 1920 by the Minister of Education, Mr. Hatakashi, to the effect that he hoped, if possible, to raise certain schools to university status. The Minister afterwards found that for certain reasons it was impossible to carry out his policy, and although the question was without intrinsic importance it provoked a storm of hostile comment in both Houses of the Diet. Violent attacks were made, culminating in a motion of non-confidence introduced into each House. Both motions were rejected, but a great amount of time was wasted, and the whole affair did not increase the public respect for representative government.

R.H. Clapp.
8/3/22

B.C. Newton
9/3/22

W.T. 9/3

(P) (67270) Wt. 33326/4 Gp. 163 3,000 1-20 W B & L

985

JAPAN.

POLITICAL.

Decode. Sir C. Eliot (Tokyo)
March 7th. 1922.

D. 5.0.p.m. March 7th. 1922.

R. 1.20.p.m. March 8th. 1922.

No. 59. (R).

Last week in Diet was comparatively quiet and a motion of no confidence in the government was rejected: but there has been trouble about minister of education (see my despatch No. 231 of May 13th. last).

When present Prime Minister assumed office it was rumoured that he would reconstruct his cabinet after this session dropping amongst others minister of education. He is now reported to have said at a secret sitting of the House of Peers that minister of education alone was responsible for the school question. Statement caused astonishment as it was understood that whole cabinet accepted the responsibility and it also greatly offended minister of education who retired into the country. But Prime Minister now says that he was misunderstood and that on vital questions cabinet will stand by any minister. Difficulty has thus been smoothed over; but incident has had a bad effect and it is believed there may be trouble again after Diet has closed.

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY.
8 MAR 1922
FOREIGN OFFICE.

1922

FAR EASTERN.

JAPAN ~~13~~

F 1300 46

MAR 31 1922

Registry Number F 1300/426/23

TELEGRAM FROM Sir C. Eliot, Tokio.

No. 81

Dated 28th March, 1922

Received 31st March, 1922

F: Japan

Proceedings in Japanese diet.

The diet closed on 27th March. The budget for next financial year was finally passed on 25th March with exception of two supplementary appropriations There was considerable disorder in the lower house on 25th March owing to an abortive attempt of government party to force through law for control of "extreme thought" but latter part of session has been quiet on the whole, lower house being mainly occupied with legislation. Since his return the Minister of Marine has been asked questions about the Conference but there have been no fierce attacks on government as expected.

Last Paper.

F: 1011

(*Print.*)

(*How disposed of.*)

(*Minutes.*)

The "control of dangerous thoughts" has long been the concern of Japanese cabinets. Evidence of this are the extreme police precautions taken against all socialists.

American Dipr. ✓ Mr ✓ (for 2nd paragraph)

GHS 5/4

G H Philips. 31/3/22

O — C Newton 1/4/22

V. Collocky 3/4/22

W.T. 3/4

(Action completed.)

GHS 5/4/22

(Index.)

EM

Next Paper.

F: 1350

2.

14

F 1300
MAR 31 1922

47

JAPAN?

POLITICAL.

Decode. Sir C. Eliot (Tokyo)
28th March, 1922.

D. 8.30 p.m. 28th March, 1922.

R. 9.00 p.m. 30th March, 1922.

No. 81. (R).

Diet closed yesterday. Budget for next financial year was finally passed on March 25th with exception of two supplementary ~~approbations~~ appropriations, one being for expenditure in connection with promotion of certain schools to university (? status). Although there was considerable disorder in lower house on March 25th over an abortive attempt of government party to force through a law for control of "extreme (thought)(sic)" latter part of session has been quiet on the whole and lower house has been occupied mainly with legislation.

Since his return from Washington Minister of Marine has on several occasions been asked questions about the conference but there have been no(? fierce) attacks on government as was originally apprehended.

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY.
31 MAR 1922
FOREIGN OFFICE.

8

1922

F. E.

48

15

F 1350

JAPAN

Universal suffrage in Japan.

Motion in favour of universal suffrage was introduced in House of Representatives by opposition on 3rd February and came up for discussion on 23rd February. The authorities exhibited nervousness and took stringent precautions, Votes of non-confidence in Speaker and government were rejected. After the debate the ministerical party moved closure, which was carried. On a division being taken the motion was rejected by 243 votes against and 147 for but, though the matter is thus shelved, the movement is gaining strength and is likely to continue to be subject for discussion during future sessions until it becomes law.

Registry Number F 1350/426/23.

FROM

Sir C. Eliot, Tokio.

No. 124.

Dated Mar. 3rd, 1922.

Received April 4th, 1922.

F.E: Japan.

Last Paper.

F: 1300

(*Print.*)

PRINTED

Japan.

(*How disposed of.*)

(*Minutes.*)

This despatch gives a vivid picture of the undercurrents of procedure of the Japanese Diet.

At present there is no burning question in Japanese politics; the opposition are trying to make Universal Suffrage into one. It is not one yet; but Sir C. Eliot in his last paragraph quotes Japanese opinion that it is gaining ground.

The arguments for and against immediate adoption of Universal Suffrage are well put by Mr. Ozaki and Mr. Tokonami in pp 8, 9.

F. Ashton-Gwatkin
11/4/22

J. E. Shuckburgh
11/4/22

(Action completed.)

RRS. 27/4/22

(Index.)

E M.

Next Paper.

F: 1486.

272218.—Wt. 8485/160—22M.—6/20.—W. & S. Ltd.—(90).

BRITISH EMBASSY.

16

TOKYO.

March 3rd 1922.

F 1350
APR 4 1922

No.124

My Lord,

Your Lordship is aware from my despatch, and those of my predecessor that a motion in favour of Universal Suffrage (that is to abolish the tax qualification in the present Franchise Law and thus confer on all male Japanese over 25 years of age the right to vote) has been proposed and rejected in the Diet several times during the last two years. It was again introduced in the House of Representatives by the Opposition on the 3rd of February and came up for discussion on the 23rd.

The Authorities have from the beginning exhibited considerable nervousness in the face of this movement, and as the day fixed for the debate drew near the precautions taken to avert disturbance became more and more stringent. No open-air suffrage meetings were permitted in Tokyo on the 23rd of February, and the roads about the Diet were partially fenced off to prevent the populace from approaching in excessive numbers, while a very strong force of police was collected at strategic points in readiness for any emergency. Notwithstanding all these preparations it was found impossible to keep the crowds back, and at noon the neighbourhood of the Diet was thronged with a huge concourse of people who

The

Marquess Curzon of Kedleston,K.G.,

etc., etc., etc.,

who vigorously cheered the Opposition members, distinguishable by their white rosettes, as they arrived. The only persons allowed access to the House were those in possession of tickets or those who wished to exercise their constitutional right of petitioning the Diet.

The debate should have commenced at about one o'clock; but the proceedings were delayed by an independent member named Yasugoro Sasaki, a burly long bearded personage popularly known as "the King of Mongolia", who attempted to introduce a vote of no -confidence in the Minister for the Interior on the ground that by preventing the public from having free access to the House he had been guilty of an unconstitutional act. Mr. Sasaki was, however, overruled by the Speaker, Mr. Oka (Ministerialist), and the debate was thereupon opened by Mr. Hironaka Kono (Constitutionalist). His speech was briefly to the effect that it was irrational to deny the franchise to the nation and at the same time to call upon it to bear the heavy burdens of the taxation and military service. It was inevitable in such circumstances that attempts to evade conscription should be on the increase and that a tendency should develop to embark on "direct action". If the Government really desired to prevent the spread of dangerous thoughts and to preserve intact the virtues and traditions of the nation they should approve of the suffrage movement and administer the State in accord with public opinion. One reason advanced by the Seiyukai for their opposition was that the political sense of the people was not sufficiently developed to enable them to

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make proper use of the right to vote. There was however no warrant whatever for the belief that the upper classes were politically more intelligent than the lower, and as a matter of fact fewer offences had been committed in elections by members of the lower classes than by those of the upper, which indicated that the adoption of universal suffrage would tend to the purification of politics.

Mr. Kono, whose speech was listened to in respectful silence, was followed by Mr. M. Kawahara (Ministerialist) who briefly urged the rejection of the proposed amendment on the ground that the issue had been submitted to the nation at the last general election and rejected as premature. Mr. Kiyose (Nationalist) then rose to support Mr. Kono, arguing that Mr. Hara's death was due to his obstinate opposition to universal suffrage. In the course of his speech Mr. Kiyose made some remarks which the Speaker interpreted as being abusive, and he was accordingly ordered to withdraw them; but, as he refused to comply, he was referred to the Disciplinary Committee. A Ministerialist member then started to address the House; but his remarks were interrupted by the Opposition and even spectators in the galleries indulged in disparaging epithets, while one person threw a live snake down into the body of the House. It was subsequently discovered that this individual was a Ministerialist sympathiser and had meant the snake for the Opposition benches, though it fell on the desk belonging to a member of his own party.

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The debate continued till 6.30 in the evening, the burden of the Ministerialist argument being that universal suffrage was not really desired by the nation and that the Opposition were far too sanguine of the good results which would flow from it. Labour problems, they insisted, could not be solved nor the dangers of militarism removed by its adoption.

While the debate was proceeding in the House, sympathisers with the movement outside were simultaneously holding indoor meetings in various parts of the city. One or two were broken up by the Authorities, and collisions in consequence occurred in various places between the police and the crowd, in the course of which some persons were roughly handled. But on the whole there was not nearly so much trouble as had been anticipated, and there would probably have been even less had the police moderated their zeal and displayed a little more common-sense.

The House met again shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th, the proceedings opening with a protest by a Nationalist member named Sunada against the action of the Speaker in referring Mr. Kiyose to the Disciplinary Committee the day before. Mr. Sunada denied that Mr.Kiyose had used the disparaging epithets attributed to him, and presented a resolution requesting the Speaker to be more careful in future. Examination of the shorthand records showed that Mr. Sunada was right, and, with the best grace they could summon, the Speaker's apologists promised that more care would be observed by him in future. They suggested

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at the same time that Mr. Sunada's resolution might in the circumstances very well be dropped; but to this the Opposition refused to agree. A fresh discussion in consequence started, in the course of which Mr. Yasugoro Sasakinrose to object to the presence of the Speaker in the House during a discussion of which he was the subject. Mr. Sasaki accordingly requested him to withdraw. Thw Speaker refused; but Mr. Sasaki was insistent. The Speaker thereupon turned the tables on Mr. Sasaki and ordered him to leave the House. Mr. Sasaki in his turn refused, and this was the signal for a general outburst of confusion and disorder. The Opposition prdtested loudly against the order; the Ministerialists as vigorously applauded it; while the Speaker and Mr. Sasaki indulged in a wordy argument which was inaudible to anybody. Eventually the Speaker retired, followed by most of the Ministerialist party, and Mr. Sasaki was left in possessionmon the rostrum, where, with the aid of a chair, he comfortably entrenched himself. Two hours later the Ministerialists slowly returned to their seats, and shortly afterwards the Speaker reentered. His appearance was the signal for acfresh outburst of angry protest from the Opposition benches, during the course of which a second exchange of inaudible argument took place on the Speaker's dais. But the redoubtable Mr. Sasaki could not be persuaded to leave the rostrum, and the Speaker thereupon left the Chamber for the second time. This ended the days proceedings.

In the interval between this and the next meeting it was privately arranged between the Opposition and the Ministerialists that, in order to avoid a repetition of the

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disorderly scenes of the 24th, the Deputy Speaker should take the chair on the 25th; but when the House assembled on that day it was announced that the arrangement had fallen through, and the situation again became threatening. Fortunately, through the mediation of the more moderate elements on both sides, calmer counsels prevailed; the Speaker did not occupy the chair, and in due course Mr. Sasaki's vote of no-confidence in him was put to the House and, thanks to the overwhelming majority of the Ministerialists, incontinently rejected. A like fate befell a vote of no-confidence in the Government in connection with the action of the Police Authorities on the 23rd, which was moved immediately afterwards. The atmosphere, having thus been cleared, the debate on Universal Suffrage was resumed and, from that moment, proceeded with comparative quiet to its inevitable end.

The first speaker was an Independent member named Matsumoto. The demand for universal suffrage was, he asserted, universal throughout the country, and the fact was obvious to everyone except the Ministerialists. If they persisted in maintaining that it was not, they could only expect that the demand would be repeated in a stronger form and accompanied, perhaps, by bloodshed. A Ministerialist member rose to reply, and twitted the Opposition with lack of consistency. In the 1921-22 session the supporters of the movement had urged that the vote should be given to every man over 25 who was earning an "independent livelihood"; but this condition had now disappeared, and it was explained that this was due to the fact that in the meanwhile conditions had radically changed. But if radical changes were to go on taking place at such short intervals and if revisions must

(1920-21)

must be introduced on each occasion to meet these changes there would be no end to the business. The party now in power were elected by voters who opposed the adoption of the system of universal suffrage, and it was therefore not right for the present House to betray the expectations of those who had elected them.

This argument was vigorously combatted by an Independent member named Shimada, who insisted that the whole nation welcomed the motion now before the House and that all the Ministerialists could advance against it was that it was premature, Against Universal Suffrage, as such, they had not a word to say. At the present moment 3,000,000 persons represented a population of close on 60,000,000; but it was clearly very dangerous that the destinies of so many should be left in the hands of so few.

Mr. Shimada was followed by Mr. Inouye, an Independent member and prefect of Kanagawa. Amid the jeers and derisive laughter of the Opposition he argued that it was not always the best policy to drift with the tide; there were occasions on which it was wiser to swim against it. Supporters of Universal Suffrage asserted that the whole nation was unanimously in favour of it; but it was not clear what form they wished it to take. How could it be said that opinion was unanimous when last year the age limit was fixed at 20 and this year at 25!. Much emphasis was laid also on the support given by the press; but the press was not always the mirror of public feeling. It sometimes happened, as was the case on this occasion, that the press was ahead of the nation.

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When Mr. Inouye had ended a member of the Constitutionalist party named Murayasu made a short speech in which he endeavoured to demonstrate that if it was wrong for persons elected under the restricted electoral system to urge the adoption of Universal Suffrage, it was equally wrong on the part of the House to have consented in 1919 to lower the tax qualification from ¥10.- to ¥5.-. It was impossible, he concluded, for the party in power to maintain their attitude of opposition; before long they must inevitably follow the example of the opposition and bedome supporters of the movement they now condemned.

The House then adjourned till the 27th. This was the last day of the debate, and the only noteworthy speech delivered on it was that of Mr. Yukio Ozaki (Independent). Mr. Ozaki, deprecated the disposition of the House to discuss the question from a purely party point of view; the issues at stake were far too big for such paltry methods. There was little doubt that many Ministerialists were at heart in favour of Universal Suffrage; but party tactics obliged them to act against their conscience. It was very clear that the situation at home and abroad must force the party in power before long to introduce into the House the very measure they were now opposing, and when that happened they would find that their present attitude of hostility had left them in an awkward position. Therefore, before voting against the Opposition motion, they should consider carefully what would happen in 1924 when they must face the polls again. At present political power was exclusively in the hands of the propertied classes; but there should be

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a better balance between duties and rights, and it was not just that while the obligation to defend the country fell on all alike, the right to vote should be denied to the bulk of the nation. Could Japan, when she compared her Franchise Law with those of other nations, call herself advanced? Again, she might hedge herself in with economic barriers; but she could not shut out ideas. A change had come over the people since the war, and it was more than probable that the demand for equality and freedom would grow from year to year. What better safety valve could there be than Universal Suffrage? But it was a safety valve which must be provided before the explosion.

The last speaker was Mr. Tokunami, the Minister for the Interior. The Government, he said, had always been in favour of extending the franchise and had in fact actually done so only three years ago. But care must be taken in determining the limits of this expansion and, for his part, he was in favour of waiting to see the results of the revision of the local electoral system before embarking on further changes. The adoption of Universal Suffrage, at a moment when popular ideas were in a state of flux was fraught with great dangers, and for that reason he believed that all thinking people would endorse the Government attitude of ~~Opposition to~~ opposing the amendment now before the House.

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When Mr. Tokunami had finished his speech a member of the Ministerialist party moved the closure. The Opposition loudly protested; but the motion was carried and a division was taken on the proposed amendment. The result was 243 votes against and 147 for.

The question is thus shelved for the moment; but, though Universal Suffrage is mainly a party cry, I am told by impartial Japanese observers that the movement for it is really gaining strength and that it will probably continue to be a subject of discussion in successive sessions until it finally becomes law a few years hence.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble Servant,

C Ellis

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26

JAPAN.

[April 4.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[F 1350/426/23]

No. 1.

Sir C. Eliot to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(*Received April* 4.)

(No. 124.)

My Lord, *Tokyo, March* 3, 1922.

YOUR Lordship is aware from my despatch and those of my predecessor that a motion in favour of universal suffrage (that is, to abolish the tax qualification in the present franchise law and thus confer on all male Japanese over 25 years of age the right to vote) has been proposed and rejected in the Diet several times during the last two years. It was introduced in the House of Representatives by the Opposition on the 3rd February and came up for discussion on the 23rd.

The authorities have from the beginning exhibited considerable nervousness in the face of this movement, and as the day fixed for the debate drew near the precautions taken to avert disturbance became more and more stringent. No open-air suffrage meetings were permitted in Tokyo on the 23rd February, and the roads about the Diet were partially fenced off to prevent the populace from approaching in excessive numbers, while a very strong force of police was collected at strategic points in readiness for any emergency. Notwithstanding all these preparations it was found impossible to keep the crowds back, and at noon the neighbourhood of the Diet was thronged with a huge concourse of people, who vigorously cheered the Opposition members, distinguishable by their white rosettes, as they arrived. The only persons allowed access to the House were those in possession of tickets or those who wished to exercise their constitutional right of petitioning the Diet.

The debate should have commenced at about 1 o'clock; but the proceedings were delayed by an independent member named Yasugoro Sasaki, a burly long-bearded personage popularly known as "the King of Mongolia," who attempted to introduce a vote of no confidence in the Minister for the Interior, on the ground that by preventing the public from having free access to the House he had been guilty of an unconstitutional act. Mr. Sasaki was, however, overruled by the Speaker, Mr. Oka (Ministerialist), and the debate was thereupon opened by Mr. Hironaka Kono (Constitutionalist). His speech was, briefly, to the effect that it was irrational to deny the franchise to the nation and at the same time to call upon it to bear the heavy burdens of the taxation and military service. It was inevitable in such circumstances that attempts to evade conscription should be on the increase and that a tendency should develop to embark on "direct action" If the Government really desired to prevent the spread of dangerous thoughts and to preserve intact the virtues and traditions of the nation, they should approve of the suffrage movement and administer the State in accord with public opinion. One reason advanced by the Seiyukai for their opposition was that the political sense of the people was not sufficiently developed to enable them to make proper use of the right to vote. There was, however, no warrant whatever for the belief that the upper classes were politically more intelligent than the lower, and as a matter of fact fewer offences had been committed in elections by members of the lower classes than by those of the upper, which indicated that the adoption of universal suffrage would tend to the purification of politics.

Mr. Kono, whose speech was listened to in respectful silence, was followed by Mr. M. Kawahara (Ministerialist), who briefly urged the rejection of the proposed amendment on the ground that the issue had been submitted to the nation at the last general election and rejected as premature. Mr. Kiyose (Nationalist) then rose to support Mr. Kono, arguing that Mr. Hara's death was due to his obstinate opposition to universal suffrage. In the course of his speech Mr. Kiyose made some remarks which the Speaker interpreted as being abusive, and he was accordingly ordered to withdraw them; but, as he refused to comply, he was referred to the Disciplinary Committee. A Ministerialist member then started to address the House, but his remarks were interrupted by the Opposition, and even spectators in the galleries indulged in disparaging epithets, while one person threw a live snake down into the body of the House. It was subsequently discovered that this individual was a Ministerialist sympathiser, and had meant the snake for the Opposition benches, though it fell on the desk belonging to a member of his party.

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When Mr. Inouye had ended, a member of the Constitutionalist Party named Murayasu made a short speech, in which he endeavoured to demonstrate that, if it was wrong for persons elected under the restricted electoral system to urge the adoption of universal suffrage, it was equally wrong on the part of the House to have consented in 1919 to lower the tax qualification from 10 yen to 5 yen. It was impossible, he concluded, for the party in power to maintain their attitude of opposition; before long they must inevitably follow the example of the Opposition and become supporters of the movement they now condemned.

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When Mr. Tokonami had finished his speech a member of the Ministerialist Party moved the closure. The Opposition loudly protested, but the motion was carried and a division was taken on the proposed amendment. The result was 243 votes against and 147 for.

The question is thus shelved for the moment, but, though universal suffrage is mainly a party cry, I am told by impartial Japanese observers that the movement is really gaining strength, and will probably continue to be a subject of discussion in successive sessions until it finally becomes law a few years hence.

I have, &c.

C. ELIOT.

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JAPAN 27

Registry Number 1486/426/23.

FROM

Sir C. Eliot.

Tokio.

No. 149.

Dated 13th March 1922.

Received 18th April 1922.

F: Japan.

Proceedings in Japanese diet.

Refers to Tokio despatch No.231 of 13th May 1921 (F 2170/348/23/1921) and Tokio telegram No.59 of 7th March (F 985/426/23). The Prime Minister stated that question of status of schools was a personal one between Mr. Hara and Mr. Hakahashi and was not a matter in which whole Cabinet shared responsibility. This statement caused great astonishment but the matter was smoothed over by the Prime Minister stating that his remarks were calculated to cause misapprehension and asking that discussion of school question should not be allowed to delay debate on Budget. A crisis has thus been averted but matter is not likely to remain there, and opinion prevails that Ministry will fall before summer.

Last Paper.

F: 1350.

(Print.)

PRINTED

Japan

King & Cabinet.

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

The Prime Minister (Takahashi) appears to have made an indiscreet and gratuitous blunder, and to have greatly weakened his position. He was never regarded as likely to stay in office for long; but now the Minister for Foreign Affairs has himself told Sir C. Eliot that he thought a change was coming within two months.

We had the substance of this by tel. (see F 985) F. Ashton-Gwatkin 20/4/22

V. Wellesley 20/4/22

The King & Cabinet 4/5

W.T. 214

(Action completed.)	(Index.)
18.4.22. 4/5/22	

Next Paper.

F. 1689.

272218.—Wt. 8485/160—22M.—6/20.—W. & S. Ltd.—(90).

BRITISH EMBASSY. -

~~TOKYO.~~

March 13th 1922.

F 1486
APR 18 1922

No.149

My Lord,

In the report of the proceedings of the Diet enclosed in my despatch No.231 of the 13th of May 1921, a brief account was given of the attack made on the Government in the 1921 session in connection with an alleged promise by the Minister of Education to raise certain schools to University rank. The difficulty was smoothed over at the time by the tact and skill of the late Prime Minister, Mr. Hara; but, as I had the honour to inform Your Lordship in my telegram No.59 of the 7th instant, an indiscreet remark made a few days ago by his successor, Viscount Takahashi in the House of Peers has revived it again in an acute form and with results which may ultimately prove fatal to the present Ministry.

The House had at the moment gone into secret session to listen to certain explanations which the Prime Minister wished to make with regard to the relations between himself and the Minister of Education on the school question, and what passed should therefore not be known to the public; but, as generally happens on occasions of this kind, someone present was guilty of a breach of confidence and divulged the proceedings.

The

The

Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, K.G.,

etc., etc., etc.,

The "school question" as it is called, is not of intrinsic importance; but, in view of the attention it is attracting in this country, a somewhat more detailed account of it than that contained in the report mentioned above may perhaps be of interest.

The domestic policy of the Hara Cabinet contained four programmes, all cleverly contrived to catch the sympathy of the public. They were (1) the completion of the system of national defence, (2) the extension of the railway system and the general improvement of communications, (3) the encouragement of national industries, and (4) the increase of higher educational institutions. The last comprised the establishment under Government auspices of 25 new Higher Schools, the increase of the technical schools from 31 to 44, and the promotion of 5 others to the status of universities, and it is to the attempt to carry this scheme into practical effect that the present trouble owes its origin. When it became known in the autumn of 1920 that the Government was making ready to proceed with its educational programme, the Authorities of certain schools in Tokyo, Osaka and other places approached Mr. Nakahashi, the Minister of Education, and obtained from him, as is asserted, a verbal promise that the institutions with which they were connected would be raised to university status in the course of the financial year 1921-1922.

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As soon however as this promise became known, it aroused violent opposition in two important quarters, the Diet, which had the power of the purse and objected to financial outlay, and the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Education, supported it is believed, behind the scenes by Prince Yamagata, who, in addition to his hostility on general principles to the Hara Cabinet, regarded Mr. Nakahashi, an unpopular member of the Ministry in any case, with feelings of personal distaste.

Against the attacks in the Diet the Minister of Education defended himself by saying that he had merely had "conversations" with the Authorities of the various schools concerned, that "officially" he had promised nothing, and that whatever he might have said was hedged about with conditions. But his enemies and the enemies of the Government would not be put off thus easily, and for days on end the Diet wasted valuable time in fruitless debate on the subject, while outside in the press and among the general public discussion raged at white heat, amid a general clamour that the "double-tongued" Minister of Education should resign. At one moment, indeed, it looked as if there might be a Cabinet crisis. Mr. Hara, however, who was singularly loyal to his friends and colleagues, came to the rescue and made it clearly known that the responsibility of the Minister of Education would, in accordance with Western parliamentary tradition, be shared by the whole Cabinet, and that therefore, if Mr. Nakahashi were forced to resign the rest of the Ministry would follow suit. The Prime Minister's

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tact and political skill eventually won. The overwhelming majority which his party possessed in the Lower House made matters secure there, and with the help of his friends and adherents in the Upper he was enabled to placate the Peers, on the understanding, however, that he would in the meanwhile appoint a new Educational Committee to investigate the school question thoroughly and that the matter should be brought up again for consideration in the 1922 Session. Before that moment arrived Mr. Hara died in tragic circumstances. But when Viscount Takahashi took over the reins of government he declared that he would conscientiously follow the Hara policy without any deviation. This he appears to have done with a considerable and, perhaps, somewhat unexpected measure of success, until the secret sitting of the House of Peers mentioned earlier, when by an unlucky slip of the tongue he was betrayed into saying that the question of status of schools was a personal one between Mr. Hara and Mr. Nakahashi and not a matter in which the whole Cabinet shared responsibility. In other words he was ready to jettison his Minister of Education.

This willingness to be rid of an unpopular colleague can hardly have been in itself a surprise, for rumours were current at the time when he became Prime Minister that he contemplated a reconstruction of his Cabinet after the present session; but for this particular"volte-face"the Peers were not prepared, and they were in consequence not only astonished but also greatly scandalized at

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a proceeding which could only be interpreted in Japanese opinion as a breach of faith and an act of disloyalty. Mr. Nakahashi who was present at the sitting, was deeply offended and betook himself in haste and high dudgeon to his country villa at Oiso, intending apparently to resign. Messengers were however immediately despatched to him by the Government which was now thoroughly embarrassed and alarmed, and after some discussion he allowed himself to be prevailed upon to return and to reconsider his decision. In the meanwhile the Prime Minister, awake to the serious nature of the position and nervous at the effect of his unguarded remark not only on his own party but also on that section of the Upper House which was regarded as the most friendly to the Government, cast about to find a way out of the dilemma. Nothing better offered than that he should eat his own words, and, accordingly, at the next Budget sitting of the Peers he explained that he had been misunderstood and that when a vital question arose the Cabinet would naturally stand or fall with any Minister.

The explanation was not received with favour, and, instead of dropping the School question and proceeding to the consideration of the Budget as a whole, the Upper House showed a very strong disposition to continue the discussion. But, as the session is now rapidly approaching an end and as it is essential that the Estimates for the next financial year should be passed without delay. it was obvious that the Government could not consent to this indefinitely, and, accordingly, after some negotiation, the Prime Minister made

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a statement in writing to representatives of the Upper House in which, while acknowledging that his remarks on the subject of Mr. Nakahashi were perhaps calculated to cause misapprehension, he asked that the school question as well as that of confidence or otherwise in himself and the Minister of Education should be deferred to a future occasion and not allowed to delay any longer the debate on the Budget. The Peers manifested at first a disposition to refuse to agree, and at one moment it looked almost as if the Budget might fail to pass; but calmer counsels eventually prevailed, and on the 8th instant, a resolution was passed in the House shelving the school question temporarily. A crisis has thus for the moment been averted; but the matter is not likely to end there. For sentimental rather than political reasons the school question has now acquired an exaggerated importance, and in making the impolitic remark which provoked the storm the Prime Minister not only injured his own prestige but also dealt a heavy blow to the Cabinet. The effects may not show themselves immediately, and the Cabinet will almost certainly remain in power till the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has ended; but the opinion prevails that some time before the summer the Ministry must either fall or be radically reconstructed. It is true that such predictions have frequently been made and falsified during the last two years, but Count Uchida himself told me a day or two ago that he thought some change in the Government would be inevitable in about two months.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble Servant,

Chas A

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34

JAPAN.

[April 18.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 2.

[F 1486/426/23]

No. 1.

Sir C. Eliot to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(*Received April* 18.)

(No. 149.)

My Lord,

Tokyo, March 13, 1922.

IN the report of the proceedings of the Diet enclosed in my despatch No. 231 of the 13th May, 1921, a brief account was given of the attack made on the Government in the 1921 session in connection with an alleged promise by the Minister of Education to raise certain schools to university rank. The difficulty was smoothed over at the time by the tact and skill of the late Prime Minister, Mr. Hara; but, as I had the honour to inform your Lordship in my telegram No. 59 of the 7th instant, an indiscreet remark made a few days ago by his successor, Viscount Takahashi, in the House of Peers has revived it again in an acute form and with results which may ultimately prove fatal to the present Ministry.

The House had at the moment gone into secret session to listen to certain explanations which the Prime Minister wished to make with regard to the relations between himself and the Minister of Education on the school question, and what passed should therefore not be known to the public, but, as generally happens on occasions of this kind, someone present was guilty of a breach of confidence and divulged the proceedings.

The "school question," as it is called, is not of intrinsic importance, but, in view of the attention it is attracting in this country, a somewhat more detailed account of it than that contained in the report mentioned above may perhaps be of interest.

The domestic policy of the Hara Cabinet contained four programmes, all cleverly contrived to catch the sympathy of the public. They were: (1) The completion of the system of national defence, (2) the extension of the railway system and the general improvement of communications, (3) the encouragement of national industries, and (4) the increase of higher educational institutions. The last comprised the establishment under Government auspices of twenty-five new higher schools, the increase of the technical schools from thirty-one to forty-four, and the promotion of five others to the status of universities, and it is to the attempt to carry this scheme into practical effect that the present trouble owes its origin. When it became known in the autumn of 1920 that the Government was making ready to proceed with its educational programme the authorities of certain schools in Tokyo, Osaka and other places approached Mr. Nakahashi, the Minister of Education, and obtained from him, as is asserted, a verbal promise that the institutions with which they were connected would be raised to university status in the course of the financial year 1921–22. As soon, however, as this promise became known it aroused violent opposition in two important quarters, the Diet, which had the power of the purse and objected to financial outlay, and the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Education, supported, it is believed, behind the scenes by Prince Yamagata, who, in addition to his hostility on general principles to the Hara Cabinet, regarded Mr. Nakahashi, an unpopular member of the Ministry in any case, with feelings of personal distaste.

Against the attacks in the Diet the Minister of Education defended himself by saying that he had merely had "conversations" with the authorities of the various schools concerned, that "officially" he had promised nothing, and that whatever he might have said was hedged about with conditions. But his enemies and the enemies of the Government would not be put off thus easily, and for days on end the Diet wasted valuable time in fruitless debate on the subject, while outside in the press and among the general public discussion raged at white heat, amid a general clamour that the "double-tongued" Minister of Education should resign. At one moment, indeed, it looked as if there might be a Cabinet crisis. Mr. Hara, however, who was singularly loyal to his friends and colleagues, came to the rescue and made it clearly known that the responsibility of the Minister of Education would, in accordance with Western parliamentary tradition, be shared by the whole Cabinet, and that, therefore, if Mr. Nakahashi were forced to resign the rest of the Ministry would follow suit. The Prime Minister's tact and political skill eventually won. The overwhelming majority which his party possessed in the Lower House made matters secure there,

and with the help of his friends and adherents in the Upper he was enabled to placate the Peers, on the understanding, however, that he would in the meanwhile appoint a new Educational Committee to investigate the school question thoroughly and that the matter should be brought up again for consideration in the 1922 session. Before that moment arrived Mr. Hara died in tragic circumstances. But when Viscount Takahashi took over the reins of Government he declared that he would conscientiously follow the Hara policy without any deviation. This he appears to have done with a considerable and, perhaps, somewhat unexpected measure of success, until the secret sitting of the House of Peers mentioned earlier, when, by an unlucky slip of the tongue, he was betrayed into saying that the question of status of schools was a personal one between Mr. Hara and Mr. Nakahashi and not a matter in which the whole Cabinet shared responsibility. In other words, he was ready to jettison his Minister of Education.

This willingness to be rid of an unpopular colleague can hardly have been in itself a surprise, for rumours were current at the time when he became Prime Minister that he contemplated a reconstruction of his Cabinet after the present session; but for this particular *volte-face* the Peers were not prepared, and they were in consequence not only astonished, but also greatly scandalised at a proceeding which could only be interpreted, in Japanese opinion, as a breach of faith and an act of disloyalty. Mr. Nakahashi, who was present at the sitting, was deeply offended and betook himself in haste and high dudgeon to his country villa at Oise, intending apparently to resign. Messengers were, however, immediately despatched to him by the Government, which was now thoroughly embarrassed and alarmed, and after some discussion he allowed himself to be prevailed upon to return and to reconsider his decision. In the meanwhile the Prime Minister, awake to the serious nature of the position and nervous at the effect of his unguarded remark not only on his own party but also on that section of the Upper House which was regarded as the most friendly to the Government, cast about to find a way out of the dilemma. Nothing better offered than that he should eat his own words, and, accordingly, at the next budget sitting of the Peers he explained that he had been misunderstood, and that when a vital question arose the Cabinet would naturally stand or fall with any Minister.

The explanation was not received with favour, and, instead of dropping the school question and proceeding to the consideration of the budget as a whole, the Upper House showed a very strong disposition to continue the discussion. But, as the session is now rapidly approaching an end, and as it is essential that the estimates for the next financial year should be passed without delay, it was obvious that the Government could not consent to this indefinitely, and accordingly, after some negotiation, the Prime Minister made a statement in writing to representatives of the Upper House in which, while acknowledging that his remarks on the subject of Mr. Nakahashi were perhaps calculated to cause misapprehension, he asked that the school question, as well as that of confidence or otherwise in himself and the Minister of Education, should be deferred to a future occasion and not allowed to delay any longer the debate on the budget. The Peers manifested at first a disposition to refuse to agree, and at one moment it looked almost as if the budget might fail to pass; but calmer counsels eventually prevailed, and on the 8th instant a resolution was passed in the House shelving the school question temporarily. A crisis has thus for the moment been averted, but the matter is not likely to end there. For sentimental rather than political reasons the school question has now acquired an exaggerated importance, and in making the impolitic remark which provoked the storm the Prime Minister not only injured his own prestige, but also dealt a heavy blow to the Cabinet. The effects may not show themselves immediately, and the Cabinet will almost certainly remain in power till the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has ended, but the opinion prevails that some time before the summer the Ministry must either fall or be radically reconstructed. It is true that such predictions have frequently been made and falsified during the last two years, but Count Uchida himself told me a day or two ago that he thought some change in the Government would be inevitable in about two months.

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